length will increase marginally which will help to operate A-320 type of aircraft with reduced load penalty. Besides, Indian Airlines has introduced a new daily morning A-320 service on Delhi-Patna-Delhi route *w.e.f.* 4th August, 2004.

(c) Due to development constraints on the expansion of the existing Patna airport, there was a proposal under consideration to shift operations to Bihata airfield. The proposal has been kept in abeyance due to the project not being viable.

Pension to retired AI employees

2094. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India employees, who had retired a decade ago, are yet to receive their pension;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The Government had approved the Air India Employees' Self Contributory Superannuation Pension Scheme effective from 1st April, 1994, only for those employees who were in active service of the Company as on 1st April, 1994. The scheme was introduced in 1996 effective 1st April, 1994. Employees who have retired before 1st April 1994 are not entitled to receive pension.

Open Sky Pact between India and USA

2095. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and USA are working out open sky pact;

(b) if so, whether US Asstt. Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs had serious discussions with regard to adoption of an open sky agreement between USA and India;

(c) whether US carriers are very interested in India and looking at potential destination;